

HIROSHIMA

A Visit to the Peace Park and the Peace Memorial Museum

by Dr M Muniruzzaman

On 6 August 1945 Hiroshima became the first city in the world to be destroyed by an atomic bomb. Almost the entire city and its inhabitants were wiped out in an instant. Survivors of the holocaust suffered great physical and mental pain. For many the nightmare still continues.

memory of the students mobilized to help the victims of the A-bomb. We entered the Peace Park through the Motoyasu Bridge. As we passed the northern end of the Park to the south, we passed the Peace Clock Tower, the Peace Bell, the Atomic Bomb Memorial Mound, the Monument in Memory of the Korean Victims of the A-bomb, the Peace Fountain and the Children's Peace Monument. All these monuments are simple but elegantly designed and convey the deep emotions and feelings of the people of Hiroshima.

There is a very touching story about the Children's Peace Monument. It goes somewhat like this. A little girl was almost dying in a hospital from the effects of nuclear radiation. In order to keep her spirits high it was suggested to her that if she could make a thousand paper cranes she would get well. The little girl made more than a thousand paper cranes from whatever bits of paper she could lay her hands on. She of course never got well, but died after making those paper cranes. The Children's Peace Monument commemorates that even. A few paper cranes made by the girl are also on display inside the Museum.

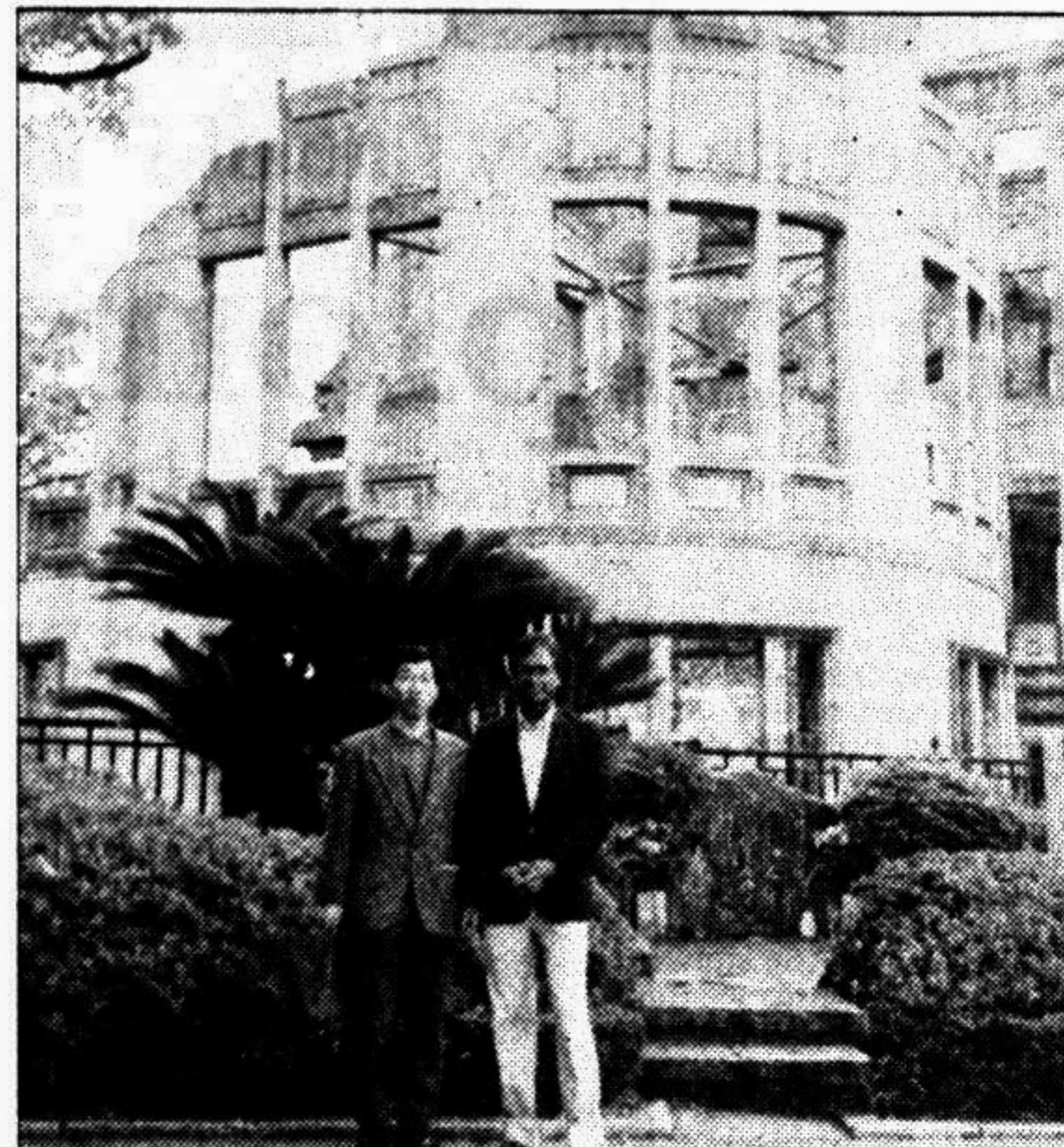
Walking further south we passed the Peace Fountain, the Flame of Peace, the Monument of Prayer and the Hiroshima Peace City Memorial — a cenotaph for the A-bomb victims. Further south and running west-east lay the International Conference Centre and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. Beyond these are the Fountain of Prayer and on the base of the triangle, the Statue of Mother and Child in the Storm.

We had spent an hour looking at the monuments inside the Park. Before entering the Museum we decided to have some lunch. It was still drizzling, when we came out of the

restaurant, but not as heavily. The Park by now was full of tourists and school children in their uniform, raincoats and their brightly coloured umbrellas. On inquiry Nakatsuka-san informed me the place is always crowded at this time of the year, particularly with school children as their schools are yet to open for the new session.

The first public display of materials related to the atomic bombing took place on September 9, 1949 and began with the establishment of the A-bomb Memorial Hall in the Hiroshima City Central Public Hall. Subsequently the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Hall and the Peace Memorial Museum were established in the Peace Memorial Park in 1955. The Peace Memorial Museum is divided into two buildings. The four-story East Building including a basement displays facts and records of Hiroshima before and after the bombing. The West Building by a corridor houses possessions of people who died in the bombing, records and other items.

A token 50 yen entrance fee is required to get into the Museum Building. We entered the first floor of the Museum through the eastern entrance. The basement of the building houses the library, meeting and projection rooms, the Peace Memorial Hall and various offices. The entrance of the first floor leads straight onto a large room which houses models of the city before and after the A-bombing and the A-bomb dome. On the walls of the room are pictures of destruction of the city, information on the bomb and messages by the Mayors of Hiroshima, commemorating the Hiroshima Day. The room also houses video tapes of the A-bombing and other information. We didn't have enough time to go through the videos, however we gathered as much information as we could from the



Dr Nakatsuka and the writer in front of the A-bomb dome

posters on display. We learnt that the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima was about 3 m long, about 0.7 m in diameter and weighed about 4 tons. The destructive power was equivalent to 15,000 tons of TNT. The hypocentre of the bomb was slightly offset to the southeast of the prefectural office building, now displayed as the A-bomb dome. Witness account of the destruction of Hiroshima speak of 'a white flash, at the same instant searing heat and blast whirlwinds'.

The second floor houses models of the former City Building, model of the Old Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital and models of the original plans for Peace Memorial Park. It also has a section depicting Hiroshima's role as a key military centre and the people of Hiroshima struggling to rebuild their lives after the bomb. The third floor houses videos on A-bomb and various peace issues as well as a section on Mankind Entering the Nuclear Age. The damage done by the A-bomb was so catastrophic that the conviction that humanity cannot coexist with nuclear weapons — has led to the establishment of the section entitled Hiroshima's Journey to the Path of Peace.

We entered the West Building through the connecting corridor. This building has only one level of exhibit. The first room has a huge display — a panorama on the scale of one to one thousand of the completely devastated city. On one side of the room is a diorama with wax figures of atomic bomb victims. This is a very striking display of civilians caught in the full blast of the explosion. The background in red shows houses on fire, people with their clothes burning and skin peeling off their bodies running helter skelter for safety.

The next few rooms exhibit the damage by the heat rays, the blast, radiation and fire. It also shows the relief and rescue operation geared up to meet the crisis. Recorded testimony of the atomic bomb survivors (in Japanese) form a vivid complement to the items on display. At the moment of the explosion, the fireball created reached a diameter of more than 200 m in the space of 0.3 s. The whole area within a radius of 2 km from the hypocentre was completely incinerated and the heat generated caused burns to people up to a radius of 3.5 km. On display in these rooms are personal possessions like burnt remains of school uniform, shoes, tiffin boxes — some with

charred remains of the contents, spectacles with their steel frames discoloured and glasses melted out, bicycles turned into burnt metal, skins and nails that peeled off from the victims' body. Display of domestic items like burnt and disfigured bread toasters, cooking utensils, glass bottles partially melted and fused together — all testify to the inferno created by the explosion. Another remarkable display is that of the shadow of a person sitting on stone steps and leaning against a wall. The portion covered by the victims body had retained the original colour of the stone, but the exposed area had turned into an ash colour. A brick wall with numerous glass splinters embedded in it testify to the velocity of the flying glasses. The short and long term effects of nuclear radiation on the civilian population has also been well documented and photographed. It said people within 1 km of the hypocentre received life-threatening doses, many of whom died within a few days. Apart from the immediate effects there were disorders that arose over a long period of time following exposure. Disorders such as leukemia and cancer appeared even ten years after victims were exposed to radiation.

The disaster caused by the atomic bomb struck the whole city in an instant. All public offices, including the prefecture office, the city office, the police station and the fire brigade were completely inactivated. Despite the confusion that followed the surrender and occupation, the people of Hiroshima rebuilding their lives in the face of the most adverse circumstances form the subject matter of the relief and rescue activities.

Nakatsuka-san and I had been inside the Museum close to three hours and were now at the end of the display. We decided to call it a day and walked out of the exhibition room and into the lobby and sat down at the place of reflection. I closed my eyes and remembered a line of message on the entrance to the Museum 'Hiroshima is a city which continually seeks peace'. I thought I understood what that sentence really means. After writing my comments in the Book of Messages for Peace, we walked out of the Museum and into the drizzle.

The author is Professor of Physics and Former Dean of the Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka.

Fortunate Mina, Helpless Police

by Farah Kabir

When Mina was brought into the police station, they were faced with the problem of where to keep her. They have the prisons for men and the women convicts, and the delinquent juvenile home/centre.

LAST month I was in Sarsha, Jessore, a union 7 kilometres from the Benapole border. The Centre for Women and Children Studies has undertaken a research on women and child trafficking. It is also engaged in a campaign for raising awareness on the issue. My involvement took me to Sarsha and I met Mina.

Mina is perhaps seven or eight years old. She is a cute little girl with a few teeth missing in the front, and two big beautiful eyes. There is fear in her eyes and she hesitates to speak. She is traumatised!

A month-and-a-half ago Mina was brought into the police station at Sarsha by a kind-hearted person. This conscientious citizen found her abandoned near the border lost and crying. Mina had been left behind by the traffickers.

The police have been trying to get her to speak, but Mina has suffered greatly and it took them long to find out her name. She would only speak in monosyllables till recently. The day we met with her she told the police the name of her father and the name of her village. On the basis of this information, police are trying to locate her father.

When Mina was brought into the police station, they were faced with the problem of where to keep her. They have the prisons for men and the women convicts, and the delinquent juvenile home/centre. They could not place her with the women convicts, nor could they place her in the juvenile home — after all she was not a criminal. Moreover, they were concerned about the kind of exposure she may have as a result of this. Ultimately one of the police drivers and his family was given the responsibility. The uncertainty of the possibility of rehabilitating her with her parents made the driver and his family jittery. They were in two minds about providing a shelter home to Mina.

Everyday there are reports of

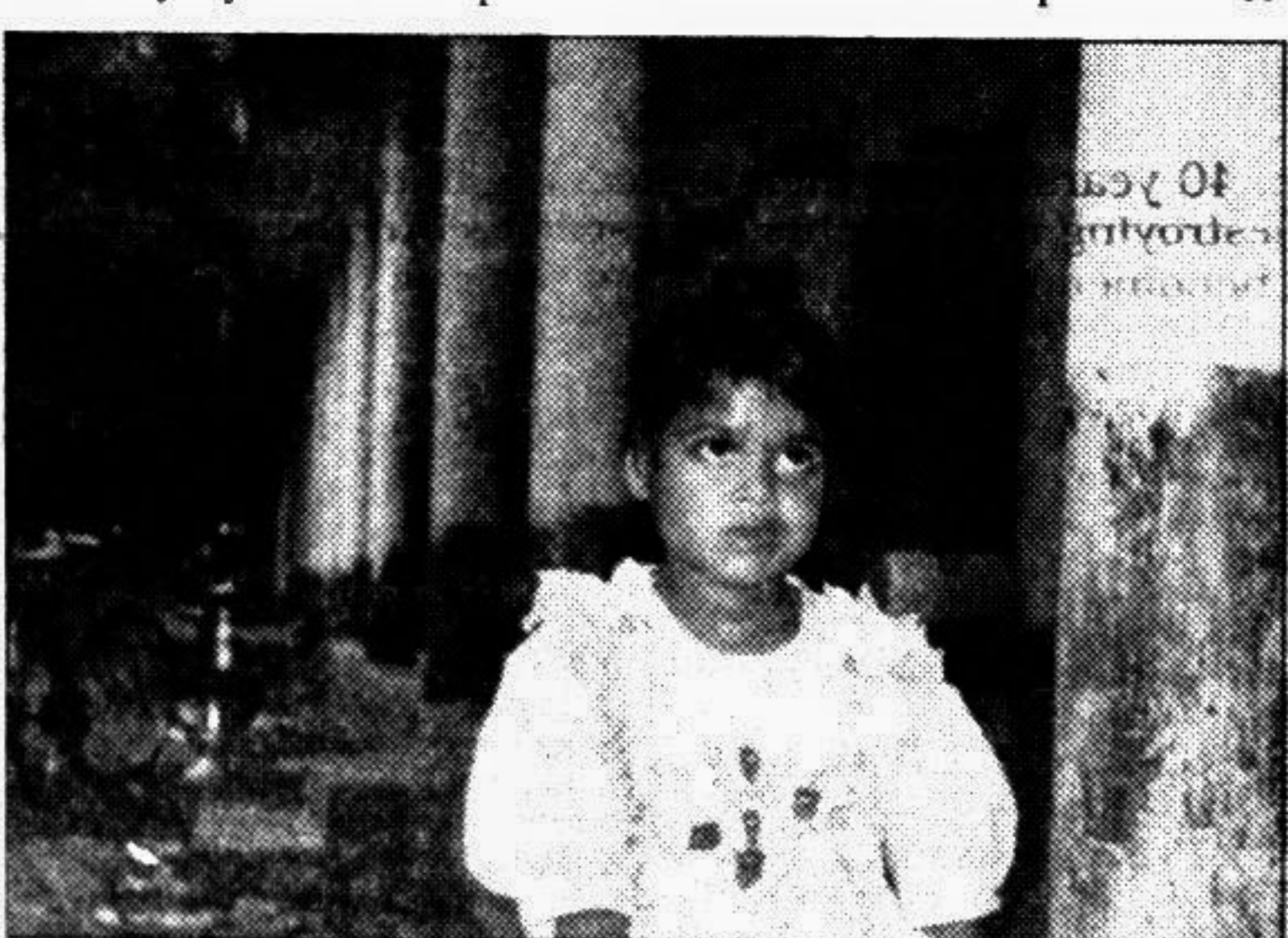
up safe custody for children urgently and seriously. Efforts are on to rescue the children and women who are trafficked, and we would not like to wait for a mishap to occur before taking any action.

The police in Sarsha were extremely disturbed when faced with the issue of providing shelter to Mina. They had this child on their hands and a GD had been filed and therefore, it was their duty to try and locate the child's parents or at least rehabilitate her. But they did not have the provision to ensure her safety. There may come a time when police might turn such cases away. If ever a child is isolated while in the custody of police with no provision of safe custody built into then we would have ourselves to blame for not having raised the issue before.

I would, therefore, like to request the policy makers and legislators to take up the issue and try and provide safe custody to children. They are already victims of the most heinous of crimes mankind has been engaged in — so, please let them not be traumatised twice!

We would like to request the government to ask the Home Ministry to closely look into the possibilities of setting up safe custody for children. Safe custody may be set up within the police station (s) which may be located at the Thana level, managed by dedicated individuals employed by the police department (s), or with the minimum number of paid staff and a few volunteers from the community. They may put in their time in shifts. School teachers and doctors may be involved in the process. Networking among the different police stations as well VDP, Ansar, the TNO, the development workers, the NGOs and others, they may consider necessary to facilitate the rehabilitation efforts may be established.

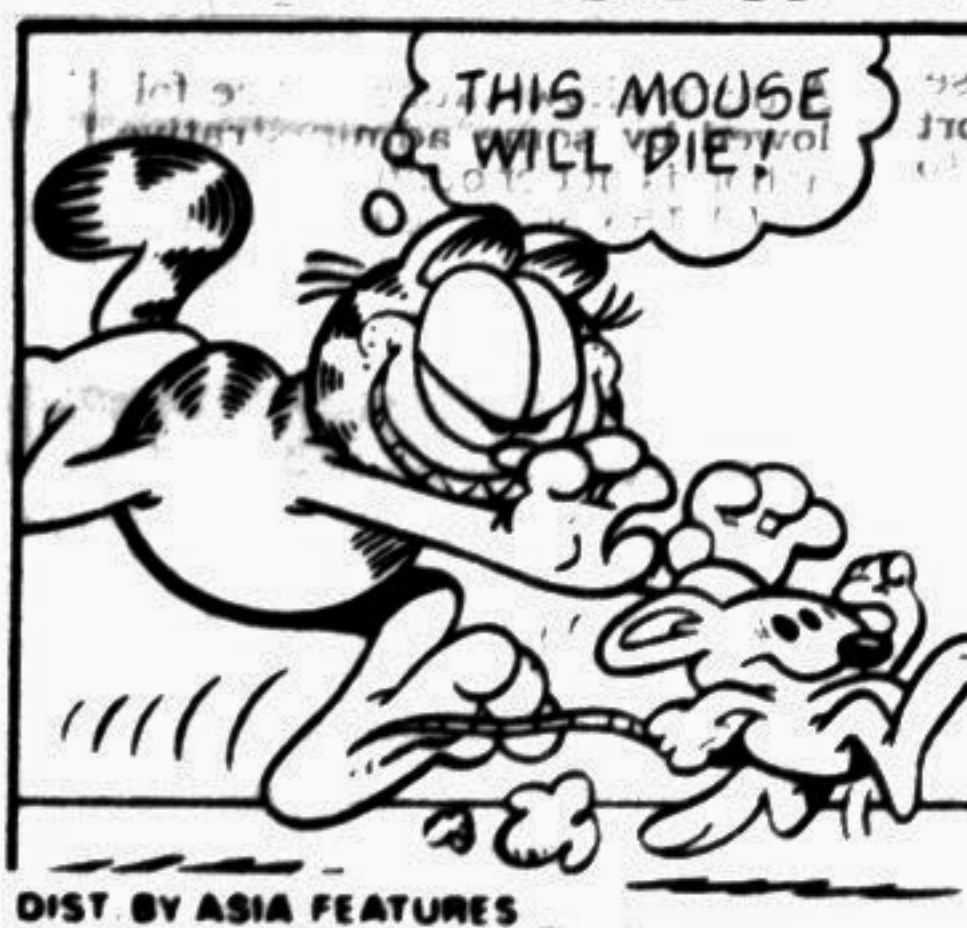
Concerted action is required to combat the problem of



women and child trafficking. Innumerable cases of child kidnapping are reported regularly in the newspapers. The government has acknowledged the problem of trafficking of women and children. It is perhaps time to provide the logistics and facilities to rehabilitate the few children that are rescued. I did not piggy back the issue of safe custody for children with that of women as many organisations, including CWCS, have been articulating this demand for some time now. Instead, I would like to request the authorities concerned to look into the matter of setting

women and child trafficking. Poverty, unemployment, high financial returns for minimum or no investment and an increase in demand for women and children for anti-social activities are the main reasons behind the abnormal increase in trafficking of women and children. To deal with these issues, national effort and support are required. It is not an easy task, nor can it be resolved in a short period. But we also have to address the multifarious problems that arise in trying to rehabilitate the victims of trafficking, we may start here.

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IAN FLEMING'S

James Bond



THE LATIN-AMERICAN DICTATOR'S SOLDIERS KILLED MY MOTHER—AFTER RAPING US BOTH!



WHICH STANDS TO REASON?



SO I RETURNED TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND BECAME A BELLY-DANCER... UNDER THE PROFESSIONAL NAME OF... ZOBIDE!

by Jim Davis



DRAWN BY JOHN McLUSKY



THAT WAS WHERE I FIRST CAUGHT THE EYE OF—SHALL WE SAY, MR NYBORG'S SCOUTS!

Metropolitan

Weather

Day temperature may rise

Light or moderate rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Khulna, Dhaka, Barisal and Chittagong divisions in next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met office says day temperature may rise by 1-3 degrees Celsius across the country.

In its outlook for subsequent two days weathermen forecast little change and increase in rainfall activities in the following five days.

Meantime, Barisal had 30 mm rain and Cox's Bazar 13 mm in the last 24 hours till 6 am yesterday.

Country's highest temperature 34.0 degrees Celsius was recorded at Dinajpur and the lowest 22.6 degrees at Sandwip.

The sun sets today at 6:38 pm and rises tomorrow (Friday) at 5:31 am.

Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	max	min
Dhaka	32.7	26.0
Chittagong	33.0	25.5
Rajshahi	32.8	26.2
Khulna	31.0	26.4
Barisal	32.7	25.4
Sylhet	32.0	26.0
Cox's Bazar	31.0	24.5

HC vacates Injunction on unloading of bulk wheat

A High Court division bench has vacated an ad interim injunction on Monday on unloading of bulk wheat by 'vacubator' at Chittagong silo jetty, a PID handout said, reports BSS.

A High Court bench earlier issued the injunction on July 14 following a writ petition submitted by Messrs Frank Shipping Limited against the Ministry of Food.

The full bench comprising Justice Kazi Ebadul Huq and Justice A K Badrul Huq after hearing the case has vacated the injunction.

5 visually impaired students pass SSC exam this year

Five visually impaired students, attached with the hostels of Association for Blind Children (ABC), passed the SSC examination this year, reports UNB.

Of them, Nazrul Islam, Abdul Ahad and Rafiqul Islam secured first division while Madhab Chandra Paul and Kowser Ahmed secured second division.

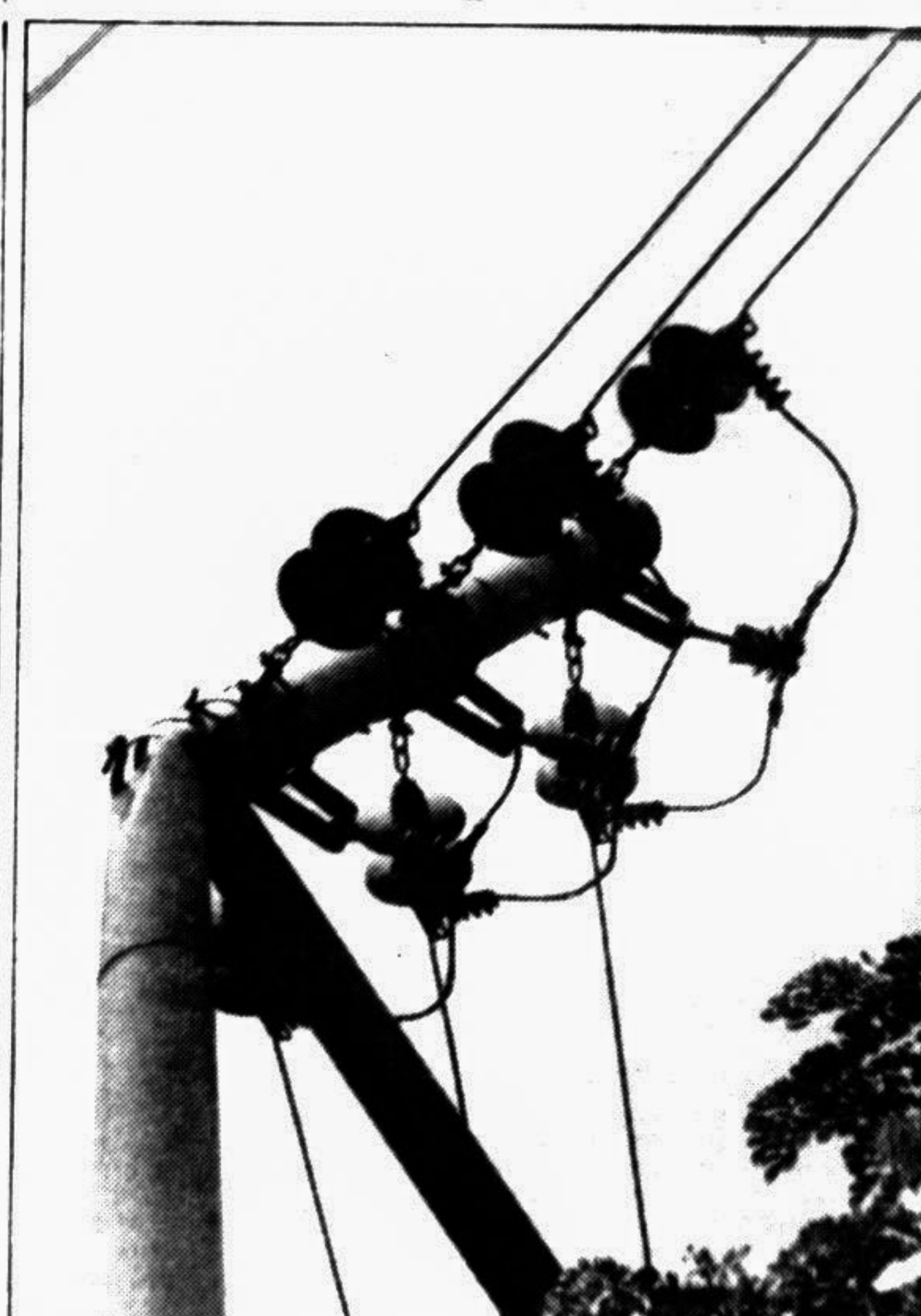
Since inception of the ABC Hostel Programme in 1980, a total of 82 visually impaired students passed the SSC examination. Of them, 37 secured first division, 42 second division and three third division.

Dr Fasiul Alam elected CU syndicate member

CHITTAGONG, Aug 6: Dr Fasiul Alam, provost of the Priyatala Hall has been elected member unopposed of the syndicate of the Chittagong University for the next two years from provost category as per Chittagong University Act 1973, reports BSS.

JS body on public undertaking meeting held

A meeting of Public Undertaking Committee of the Jatiya Sangsad was held at Sangsad Bhaban yesterday with its Chairman Whip Prof Rafiqul Islam in the chair, reports UNB.



An electric post was damaged when a big tree fell upon it during storm yesterday in front of the BIRDEM Hospital yesterday.

Confce on problem of minority in Bangladesh held in UK

The fourth conference on violation of human rights of religious and ethnic minorities was held recently at the House of Commons and House of Lords under the auspices of the UK chapter of Bangladesh Hindu Bouddha Christian Oikya Parishad, says a press release.

Chaired by Dr Paresah Das and Roman Banerjee, the two-day conference was addressed, among others, by Lord Eric Avebury, Chairman of Parliamentary Human Rights Committee, Mike Gapes MP, Siman Hughes MP, Shadow Overseas Development Minister Clare Short MP, Ahmed Hossain Zoarder, General Secretary of UK Awami League and Bangladesh High Commissioner in UK, Mahmood Ali.

The speakers discussed many points on human rights violation of the religious and ethnic minorities in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh should recognise the clause of the International Human Rights Charter to ensure equal rights of the minorities, the speakers added.

Addressing the conference, the High Commissioner of Bangladesh in UK said the present government would try to overcome the problems of human rights gradually.

The conference adopted several resolutions which include immediate solution to the CHT problems politically, restoration of 1972 Constitution, and

The Lancet lauds DOTS applied by BRAC

A leading British medical journal, 'The Lancet', has commented that the directly observed therapy, short course (DOTS) applied in Bangladesh by BRAC can indeed lead to a high cure rate of tuberculosis and low rate of relapse and dropout among patients.

The prestigious journal, simultaneously published from London and Boston, was commenting on a research report from Bangladesh published in the same issue, says a press release issued by BRAC yesterday.

The journal recommended that the factors that contributed to the success of the study in Bangladesh must be explored by other countries to examine the feasibility of the application of the project universally. Of the 13 countries in which 75 per cent of the world's tuberculosis patients live, only five, including Bangladesh, have adopted short-course directly observed therapy as their national strategy. The success factors include the existence of an effective non-governmental organization capable of securing technical and financial support from several agencies. The journal added that considering the human elements involved, the DOTS strategy calls for a 'revolution of thinking' in many aspects of health care position.

According to Lancet, despite the effort made by the nation to improve case identification and treatment compliance, tuberculosis remains a major public health problem in Bangladesh where tuberculosis is found to be two times more prevalent in men than in women.

BRAC began its experimental tuberculosis control programme by employing women health workers to identify suspected cases and diagnose the positive patients under the DOTS. The therapy is carried on for twelve months followed by an eight-month oral regimen. All drugs are provided to the patients free. The tuberculosis control programme of BRAC successfully achieved high rates of case detection and treatment with a cure rate of 85 per cent.

The research report said that BRAC's TB programme relies mainly on village women, who are trained as community health workers and are a part of the organization's Rural Development Programme.

So far more than 4500 health workers have been trained to detect and treat tuberculosis and each woman is assigned to cover about 200 households. The DOTS approach has been highly appreciated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and was declared to be a 'breakthrough strategy'. The National Tuberculosis Programme of Bangladesh supports BRAC with technical advice, supplies and also monitors over the programme quality, the report said.